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DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-259-3-26>

## **REVISION OF APPROACHES TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING OF DEAF CHILDREN IN UKRAINE**

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The problem of including a foreign language component in the standard of education for deaf children in Ukraine has been discussed since 2014. The beginning of the discussion was related to the change in the status of the subject 'Foreign language' in special schools for the deaf, because until 2014 this subject could be studied exclusively as an elective by the deaf, and since 2014 it has become essential.

The analysis of educational programs of Ukrainian special schools until 2014 confirms that 'Foreign language' as an optional subject was studied in special schools for hard-of-hearing children only, and in schools for the deaf, this subject was not studied at all. According to the results of a survey of school administrations regarding non-learning of a foreign language by deaf children, it is possible to determine the following reasons for this situation: lack of foreign language teachers who know special methods for teaching deaf students; shortage of academic hours for studying additional subjects, since optional hours are usually used to correctional-and-developmental work for the development of speaking of the Ukrainian spoken language; there is no request from parents for their deaf children to learn the

foreign languages because of they have the opinion it is not necessary for the deaf life [4, p. 55].

In 2014, there were significant changes in the concept of school education and education standards in Ukraine, which affected the requirements for the learning outcomes of deaf children. Therefore, since 2014, a foreign language began to be studied by the deaf from the second grade for one academic hour per week [6, p. 120]. But hearing children start studying such a subject from the first grade and at least two hours a week.

At the same time, the foreign language learning outcomes for the deaf are identical to those of their hearing peers, including such requirements as listening and speaking [2, p. 93]. In such conditions, the deaf should learn foreign languages faster and in fewer hours and demonstrate the same academic achievement required from hearing peers.

Thus, this situation created unequal conditions for deaf children's access to learning foreign languages compared to their hearing peers.

And this is happening against the background of the fact that in Ukraine there are no training for foreign language teachers to teach deaf children as a specific category of students, and no special methods of teaching foreign languages adapted for the deaf, so until now, the same teaching methods are used in special schools for the deaf and for hearing students.

It is also important to note that the vision of learning foreign languages, which is usual for schools for hearing children, was automatically transferred to Ukrainian special schools for the deaf without any rethinking. After all, in Ukraine, English has been studied as the first foreign language in many schools for hearing children [1, p. 10]. Therefore, since 2014 in special schools for the deaf English began to be studied as a 'Foreign language'.

At the same time, the analysis of the practice of teaching a foreign language in special schools for the deaf proves that due to the lack of special training of teachers, they do not possess, and therefore do not use in the teaching process, such techniques of communicative support of spoken language as fingerspelling, Cued Speech, etc. [3, p. 180].

However, this situation now requires rethinking. This is due to the challenges faced by the national education system in connection with Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

We interviewed 55 adult deaf refugees from Ukraine who, at the time of the interview, had been in their host countries for more than three months. Refugees from ten countries (Austria, Italy, Canada, Germany, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, France, and the Czech Republic) took part in the survey.

The results of the survey indicate that 88.18 % of deaf refugees seek to learn the local foreign languages of the host country. Thus, 84.85 % of respondents express a desire to learn the local sign language, 82.96 % need to learn the local spoken language; 9.24 % want to learn English; 5.33 % want to learn American Sign Language.

Thus, the intensive movement of the deaf caused a change in the attitude of the deaf refugees to foreign languages, and hence the need to revise approaches to foreign language education of the deaf.

It is obvious that deaf refugees from Ukraine are currently in different countries, but it is impossible to learn a huge number of languages at school, and it is practically impossible to predict in advance which countries the deaf may visit in the future. Therefore, during school education for the deaf, it is necessary to study those languages that can provide the greatest opportunities to adapt to different countries. If we consider spoken languages, the most common language in international communication in different countries is English. Therefore, deaf children should learn this language as one of the foreign languages, giving them wider communication opportunities.

At the same time, deaf children should learn foreign languages not only spoken language but also sign language. In particular, the participants of our study indicated that the first foreign language they want to learn is the local sign language and only then the local spoken language. This is because if the deaf knows the local sign language, they will be able to use the services that are used by local deaf people. In this way, it significantly expands the opportunities for the deaf to integrate into the local community even before he/she has mastered the local spoken language.

However, the question arises as to which foreign sign language is appropriate for learning in Ukrainian special schools for deaf children. A possible answer to this question could be American Sign Language. On the one hand, due to its widespread use in the countries of North America, as well as because a significant part of sign from this language is included in the International Sign, and also belongs to the Old French family of sign languages, which is one of the most widespread in the countries of Europe.

An important part of the foreign language education of deaf children should be the study of the International Sign as an international system of communication among the deaf, which is used by the deaf from different countries. Therefore, when the deaf visit a country whose sign language he/she doesn't know, the use of International Sign could increase the chances to find opportunities for communication with local deaf people.

In addition to the above, it is important to emphasize that the study of a foreign spoken language should be the priority of deaf children mastering reading and writing, rather than listening and speaking. Also, it is important for learning foreign languages by the deaf to use appropriate techniques of communicative support of speech – for writing it is fingerspelling, and for visual perception of oral speech, it can be Cued Speech [5, p. 170].

However, the introduction of new approaches to foreign language education for the deaf in Ukraine is impossible without the training of foreign language teachers with competency in special methods and techniques for teaching deaf children.

The procedure for learning foreign languages by deaf children is also important. First, foreign sign language should be taught since primary school, foreign spoken language can be taught since secondary school, and International Sign can be taught in high school. Such sequences are appropriate for several reasons. First, in primary school, deaf children don't yet have fluent Ukrainian spoken language and could experience significant difficulties in learning spoken language. Therefore, the learning of another spoken language significantly increases the unsuccessful experience of deaf children. Secondly, learning a foreign sign language will enable a deaf child to get a positive experience of learning foreign languages, which could motivate deaf children to learn other foreign languages in the future.

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DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-259-3-27>

**FORMATION OF SOFT SKILLS AS A FACTOR  
OF PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL SUCCESS**

**ФОРМУВАННЯ SOFT SKILLS ЯК ЧИННИК ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ  
ТА СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ УСПІШНОСТІ**

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